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# Cape Hatteras National Seashore ORV Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement Alternatives Options Workbook

## Summary List of Options from Workbook Comments

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### *Vehicle Requirements*

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#### **1. Regulate the characteristics of vehicles on the beach.**

- Only state licensed four-wheel drive vehicles should be allowed on beach. The superintendent would have authority to allow non-four drive wheel drive ORVs on beach if the ORVs are shown to be operable on the beach and not a safety hazard. If a vehicle on the beach is shown to be a safety hazard, the superintendent will have right to remove vehicle from the beach.
- ORVs cannot have more than a 6-inch lift kit. (This excludes many of the trouble makers and abusers on the beach.)
- Tire size should be oversized but cannot be over a 325 width and non-aggressive type tire. (This requirement goes hand in hand with the 6-inch lift maximum that again gets rid of the “monster” type vehicles and again gets rid of many of the abusers of the beach.)

### *Speed Limits*

#### **1. Lower the speed limit in certain areas or during certain times of day.**

- Consider having a 10 or 15 mph speed limit after dark or after sunset.
- The posted speed limit on the beach is 25 mph. I would like to see the posted speed limit reduced on interdunal roads and beach corridors to reduce the risk of accidents.

#### **2. Address safety concerns in front of villages by lowering the speed limit.**

- NPS database figures show that visitation goes down in the off-season. Reduced and enforced speed limits in front of villages can deal with concerns of safety of the few beach users. Thanksgiving and Easter village closures may be effective.
- North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) changes the speed limits in the villages to accommodate increased visitation and safety concerns. It stands to reason that NPS would follow suit with seasonal closures. There cannot possibly be more traffic on the beaches than there is on the highway!

### *Vehicle Free Areas*

#### **1. Establish a vehicle-free area only seasonally and open these areas to ORV use during other times of the year.**

- There should be definite defined use areas during the summer season but after access should be granted in off-season to ORVs for fishing.
- Seasonal ORV use. Parking lot with access north of Avon not adjacent to Ramp 34. Expand parking lot north of Ramp 38 [in reference to area from Ramp 34 north of Avon to Ramp 38 south of Avon]
- There already exists as a passive recreation area the entire beachfront of Avon in the closed season. A parking place and pedestrian access immediately adjoining the northern boundary of Avon with a passive boundary line on the beach 200 yards north of the Avon boundary

- 1 would be preferable to closing access south of Ramp 34. This would open up September 15,  
2 just as the villages beaches do now.
- 3 ■ If seasonal closure is necessary, it should be only from south of Ramp 34 to north of Ramp 38  
4 in front of houses in Avon and just for peak summer season.
  - 5 ■ Maintain September 15 to May 15 opening.
  - 6 ■ Should be open out of season up to the jetties. [in reference to ORV corridor from Ramp 43  
7 to Cape Point to Ramp 49]
- 8
- 9 **2. Improve pedestrian access and facilities with more parking, fencing, and signage.**
- 10 ■ Fencing at parking areas should be configured so pedestrians have to walk by signage  
11 explaining resource and other types of closures before they can get to the beach
- 12
- 13 **3. Limit vehicle free areas to lifeguarded beaches only.**
- 14 ■ Passive recreation area should only be used for lifeguarded beaches.
  - 15 ■ Not in agreement with creating the “passive recreation” designation EXCEPT for lifeguarded  
16 beaches. In the alternative, if the “P-R” designation is created, then include the area south of  
17 Ramp 38 (closed for years) to Buxton as a “P-R” area.
- 18
- 19 **4. Provide pedestrian corridors in ORV use areas.**
- 20 ■ May need a walkway. And allow ORVs south only. [in reference to leaving Ramp 23 open]
  - 21 ■ Provide safe pedestrian path, off the road to access beaches.
- 22
- 23 **5. Provide additional vehicle-free areas when designated vehicle-free areas are closed for  
24 resource protection.**
- 25 ■ No option plan was presented to change ORV areas to passive areas if passive beaches  
26 become closed for resource protection measures.
- 27
- 28 **6. Adjust the seasonal duration of vehicle-free areas.**
- 29 ■ The only possible change that can be justified would be to adjust the period for seasonal  
30 closures to May 1 through October 15. This alternative states that Ramp 23 should remain  
31 open, but then calls for pedestrian access as the ramp does not have heavy ORV access.
- 32
- 33 **7. Create additional vehicle free areas.**
- 34 ■ Only close areas in front of villages.
  - 35 ■ Have seasonal closures in front of the villages, north of Ramp 23 if there is a need, but not  
36 past Ramp 23. There are not enough reasons to take the next four miles for passive use.
  - 37 ■ Have a seasonal closure north of Ramp 23 for a passive recreational area.
  - 38 ■ Create year-round passive areas a mile on each side of the villages. Create a passive area  
39 from Ramp 34 to Ramp 44; close Ramp 43; close Ramp 49 when campers are in the Seashore  
40 and/or open Ramp 49 when there are not campers in Frisco campground.
  - 41 ■ Ban ORV access in front of Frisco campground for safety reasons.
  - 42 ■ All village beaches should be passive access only.
  - 43 ■ Do away with Ramps 57 and 60. Establish a pedestrian access trail.
  - 44 ■ Access within the village limits must be restricted to passive use only and the use of ORVs  
45 prohibited on a permanent basis. The density of people even in the off-season is still  
46 significant enough to warrant this protection to users. The season is no longer May 15 to  
47 September 15 as the expansion of rental properties has created ample supplies to cater to all  
48 types of non-seasonal visitors. Many properties are offered for rent on a year-round basis. At  
49 the peak season, in the little space that Hatteras Landing occupies, there is a density of  
50 approximately 4,500 people per square mile. The second most densely populated county in

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6 **8. Provide ORV corridors through vehicle-free areas.**

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- 8 ■ If this is to be used as a recreational area, leave the ramps open and have ORV usage via corridors with drivers leaving vehicles parked and accessing the beach as a pedestrian.
  - 9 ■ In high use areas, there could be designated travel corridors and speed limits, which would greatly alleviate safety concerns. This would only be needed when congestion is high and would not need to apply year round. I do not believe that ORV use damages the beach. Traces of ORV use vanish quickly with tides, wind, rain, storms.
  - 10 ■ Narrow the existing corridor, allowing ORV usage so that the ORV users could park vehicles within the corridor and still maintain usage as a pedestrian. All this would be dependant on the amount of erosion on these stretches, with corridors immediately open when beaches are wide enough for a corridor to exist. All corridors should be surrounding closures at a satisfactory distance and pedestrian usage, after the vehicle is parked in the corridor.
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19 **9. Remove the term “passive recreation.”**

- 20 ■ I object to the term “Passive Recreation” being used to refer to all beaches except ORV beaches as almost all users of ORVs also engage in the activities described in your definition of “Passive Recreation” when on the beaches. Since all the beaches of the Seashore are recreation beaches I would suggest that the distinction between beaches be limited to “Lifeguard” or “Swim” beaches, “Multi-use” beaches, and “ORV Multi-use” beaches, which will fairly describe all beaches.
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27 **10. Provide additional facilities, such as parking or reconfiguration of access ramps, to accommodate vehicle-free areas.**

- 28 ■ My suggestion is to create a series of passive access entry locations approximately every ½ mile along route 12 with parking for 40–50 vehicles with walk over ramps provided. In most places, the beach is not wider than 200 feet so once parked and on the beach, you never need to walk more than ¼ mile laterally to get to the location you want. If this could be accomplished in the areas designated passive, then true access has been accomplished. More remote and less sensitive areas could then be created or continued for ORV access. This may require closing some current ramps and creating new ramps to afford access to areas better suited to ORV usage.
  - 29 ■ The farther north the crossing the better. Parking should be increased on the west (soundside) in this area. [in reference to Ramps 58 and 59]
  - 30 ■ Expand the current parking lot but have two lane accesses to eliminate over crowding and conflicts. [in reference to Ramps 58 and 59]
  - 31 ■ Boardwalk from lots to beach would be very costly and seldom permanent. A well-maintained walking path is a better option.
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44 **11. Provide more vehicle free areas during non-seasonal times.**

- 45 ■ No option questions were presented for access that is more passive during non-seasonal times.
- 46  
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48 **Closures**

49 **1. Eliminate certain types of closures such as Safety Closures or Seasonal Closures.**

- 1           ▪ Do away with seasonal and non-seasonal areas, decide on an equal allocation between the  
2 two access groups (passive and motorized) then make it formal.  
3

4       **2. Develop a consistent nomenclature for closures.**

- 5           ▪ It would be simpler to use just four types of closures: ORV safety closure (pedestrians  
6 allowed), no-entry safety closure (like during hurricanes), resource closure with pedestrian  
7 corridor, and resource closure—all entry prohibited  
8

9       **3. Change the dates and/or the distance of the closures in front of villages.**

- 10          ▪ The only possible change that can be justified would be to adjust the period for seasonal  
11 closures to May 1 through October 15.  
12          ▪ Commenters suggested alternative closing dates including: Memorial Day to Labor Day; May  
13 30 to September 1, May 1 to September 30 (consistent with Nags Head), and closure dates  
14 based on occupancy or visitation rates.  
15          ▪ This should a function of public usage, not necessarily dates [some commenters asked that  
16 these dates be based on visitation, others on resource conditions], with criteria for closures  
17 and their opening.  
18          ▪ Use the school calendar to determine summer closures in front of villages  
19          ▪ Effective only if passive recreation is the only permitted use for a longer stretch than 1 mile.  
20          ▪ May be effective if kept to ¼ mile, as most people are not willing to walk beyond the point  
21 that they came on, especially those with kids. However another problem arises in that this  
22 would be out of the protective zones that can be watched by lifeguards which than again be  
23 quite dangerous.  
24          ▪ If this is done [increased parking around the villages], I suggest the expanded areas identified  
25 in 1.C.5 be 1 mile on either side of each village.  
26

27       **4. Apply ORV restrictions on lifeguarded beach only when beaches are open and limit the  
28 distance of these areas.**

- 29          ▪ Limit the ORV restriction to daylight hours or while the beach is open and lifeguards are on  
30 duty.  
31          ▪ The Buxton lifeguard beach should be limited to a 3/10th of a mile section year around and  
32 the remaining full mile south to Ramp 43 should be open year around to ORV multi-use as  
33 this section is rarely used in the summer and even less in the rest of the year. Congestion at  
34 the point could be reduced by opening this one-mile north of Ramp 43 to ORV multi use all  
35 year.  
36          ▪ The Buxton area does not have parking access from the lighthouse to Ramp 43. From jetties  
37 south to the lighthouse parking area is approximately 500 yards and should be closed. The  
38 rest should remain open to ORVs.  
39

40       **5. Provide an ORV corridor in front of lifeguarded beaches and campgrounds.**

- 41          ▪ As written, I do not agree with this alternative for beaches in front of campgrounds. I  
42 suggest there is enough area to allow 30 feet of “hood to tailgate” ORV parking on the upper  
43 beach with a buffer 15 feet from the toe of the dune, then an ORV pass through or track. In  
44 cases where it is determined there is not enough area to use this system, an area of ORV  
45 parking should be established on either side of the pass through section of beach.  
46 Campground regulations should be separate from lifeguard beach regulations.  
47

48       **6. Restricted access should be consistently applied (i.e., if closed to one user group, and area is  
49 closed to all user groups)**

- 50          ▪ If the area is closed to ORV traffic, then it needs to be closed to pedestrian traffic as well. The  
51 area is closed for protection. If the NPS is the only personnel allowed in area, then it needs to

1 be clearly marked AND enforced. NPS Personnel should be easily identified as NPS  
2 personnel.  
3

4 **7. Provide training on threatened and endangered species to lifeguards.**

- 5 ■ New lifeguard hires must be educated to be able to explain T/E species justification (and  
6 agree with the Endangered Species Act) to the public.  
7

8 ***Ramps and Access Routes***

9 **1. Reconfigure ramps and improve maintenance to increase safety.**

- 10 ■ All ramps and interdunal roads should be two lanes for safety reasons.
- 11 ■ Ramps should be constructed so that they also have benefit to passive recreational users.  
12 Ramps should be placed on the boundaries between passive and ORV access areas.
- 13 ■ Stainless steel mesh matting is a good alternative, as it will last forever with no maintenance.
- 14 ■ All should be two lanes for safety and routine maintenance would stop the formation of  
15 potholes that grow into pools that people drive around into vegetation. Pole Road must be  
16 returned to two lanes and must be maintained regularly. This should have been standard  
17 operating procedure.
- 18 ■ Existing or new ramps should be redesigned. Wider ramps (two vehicles with entry and exit  
19 lanes) that are maintained with mulch or gravel on a regular basis that facilitate efficient  
20 access to the beach and avoid congestion should be considered. Vehicles should not stop or  
21 park within 200 yards of a ramp; no airing down on approaches to ramps. Ramps should not  
22 be constructed or procedures initiated that cause access to be impeded at ramps.
- 23 ■ Ramps 58 and 59 should be enlarged.
- 24 ■ A second option would be to close and relocate Ramp 49 so it does not impact the area in  
25 front of Frisco campground. A third option would be to do away with Ramp 49 and only have  
26 access via Ramp 44 in Buxton. There should be a year-round passive recreation area from  
27 wherever Ramp 49 is located to Ramp 55 in Hatteras.  
28

29 **2. Continue to use NC-12 as an interdunal road around closures.**

- 30 ■ In this case the status quo is the preferred, continue to use the existing interdunal road NC 12,  
31 which is maintained by the NCDOT.
- 32 ■ Use the highway instead of plowing up 4-5 miles of vegetation and other resources.  
33

34 **3. Opening of additional ramps, including opening of all historic ramps, and provide  
35 additional access if ramps are lost.**

- 36 ■ All of the ramps need to be opened including the ramps that were closed in the last 25 years.
- 37 ■ Believe there should be an emergency ramp at Oregon Inlet instead of cutting through dunes  
38 for large emergencies. Redevelop Ramp 20 so it may be used in the fall instead of the misuse  
39 that is occurring.
- 40 ■ If all existing ramps were open and functional, the situation would be much more fluent. The  
41 Ramp at the Point campground, for example should be reopened.
- 42 ■ Ramp 1 should be re-opened year around. An interdunal road should be established from  
43 Ramp 2 to Ramp 4.
- 44 ■ Ramp 20 at the Rodanthe Pier should be re-opened seasonally.
- 45 ■ Ramp 45 should be re-opened when the campground is closed.
- 46 ■ Many commenters included opening additional access ramps (some stating for resource  
47 protection and to reduce conflicts, provide alternate access in times of high tide). Specific  
48 suggestions included:
  - 49 ■ Open Ramps 1 and 2, except for summer months.
    - 50 ● Additional Ramps from 20 to 34. Suggestions for one between 30 and 34 and one  
51 between 27 and 34.

- 1 • More access between Ramps 23 and 24.
- 2 • More ramps near Frisco Pier area.
- 3 • Open Ramp 45 near the Cape Hatteras campground.
- 4 • The complete ORV access system should be reconfigured. The new system should
- 5 maximize flexibility and alternative ORV access points through the use of an expanded
- 6 ramp system, allowance for by pass or “go around” areas and a complete inter-dunal
- 7 road system.
- 8 ■ Ramp 1 should be open all year and Ramp 2 should be closed only when the lifeguard beach
- 9 is open.
- 10 ■ Open beach South of Nags Head Sept. 1 to May 30 except as needed for occasional
- 11 temporary safety and resource closures.
- 12 ■ The ramp at the Frisco Pier should be re-opened in the off-season and the beach re-opened to
- 13 Ramp 55 in the off-season. Pole Road must be two lanes wide again for safe passage and
- 14 Spur road widened to two lanes. The beach from Ramp 59 west to Ramp 67 (which should be
- 15 relocated to the east side of the parking lot) should be open year around to reduce the
- 16 concentration at the inlet.
- 17 ■ Providing/moving ramps if ramps are lost.
- 18 ■ New Alternative...1.A.3 An alternative that considers opening all historic previously used
- 19 ramps and interdunal roads should be developed. In all situations where these historic points
- 20 of access are not considered, a firm reason for the closure should be explained, documented
- 21 and the public should be allowed comment through this National Environmental Policy Act
- 22 (NEPA) process. In addition, any alternative that restricts historic access points should
- 23 provide for public consideration, some sort of “mitigation” in order to retain public use.
- 24 Management tools that would meet this “mitigation criteria” could include expanded parking
- 25 areas, automatic sunset provisions if the reasons for closure are dynamic, or expansion of
- 26 access in other areas in the Seashore.
- 27 ■ Re-design the ramp system. There are too many ramps. They are inappropriately placed,
- 28 designed, and do not adequately move traffic. Too many ramps make it difficult to adequately
- 29 protect and patrol the ocean beach. Keep the old ramps, where appropriate, to use as
- 30 emergency ramps and consider the option to temporarily open appropriate ramps to provide
- 31 ORV access to areas that are still open to ORV (use to detour around areas that have become
- 32 temporarily closed to ORV access).
- 33 ■ Furthermore, a well thought and planned development of Ramps 1, 2, 4, and 20, 23, 27 areas
- 34 will create immediate value and help spread the congestion out along the entire resource. A
- 35 new ramp access at 25 would help even further. This final construction plan could be phased
- 36 in over several years to help with costs and budgets. If Ramp 1 were expanded with a bath
- 37 house and parking this would be good. But even better if a Coquina style bath area was made
- 38 at 23, 25 or 27 even better. The key is to have a well-designed plan and then spread the
- 39 construction costs to the out years.
- 40 ■ Open Ramp 20 in except for the summer season.
- 41 ■ A ramp should be added south of Frisco Pier and north of Hatteras Village.
- 42 ■ Leaving the ramp and ORV open and increase parking, restrooms, bath area is best. Also
- 43 consider new ramp at 25 or so. An ORV corridor to bypass closures would work well.
- 44 ■ Close 34 to 38 “seasonally.” Ramp 38 should be kept open to ORV use with expanded
- 45 parking and facilities.
- 46 ■ Design two ramps for Ocracoke one at the North end one in the South end. Ramps should be
- 47 situated so that they divide passive areas from ORV areas. Institute shuttles services provide
- 48 by local concessionaries. Do away with seasonal and non-seasonal closures.

- 1           ▪ More ramps and access are needed in the Buxton Motel area, south of the Canadian Hole and  
2 north of Hatteras Village. All spur and interdunal roads should be two-lane with pull-offs.  
3 More sound side access is needed around the village areas and near Avon.  
4

5           **4. Reduce the number of existing ramps.**

- 6           ▪ Reduce routes open to ORV access in order to meet stated objectives of the management  
7 plan.  
8           ▪ There are too many ramps. It makes it difficult for proper supervision and protection by NPS  
9 rangers. Some ramps are inappropriate at certain times of the year (Ramp 49 when the  
10 campground is open) Ramp 43 is redundant with its close proximity to Ramp 44. Hatteras  
11 Island would be easier to maintain, manage and patrol with three ORV access ramps, Bodie  
12 Island one access ramp, and Ocracoke two access ramps.  
13

14           **5. Change the numbering of the ramp system.**

- 15           ▪ Make the ramp numbers consistent with the Highway 12 mile markers.  
16

17           **6. Expand/Change the interdunal road system.**

- 18           ▪ The beach from Ramp 59 west to Ramp 67 (which should be relocated to the east side of the  
19 parking lot) should be open year around to reduce the concentration at the inlet. The year  
20 around corridor system has only contributed to destroying bird habitat by allowing vegetation  
21 to proliferate.  
22           ▪ An interdunal road should be established from Ramp 4 to Oregon Inlet.  
23           ▪ The interdunal road system between Ramps 23 and Ramp 34 should be re-opened with  
24 intermittent crossover roads to the beach. ORV access south of Ramp 38 should go further  
25 south past Haulover Beach in the off-season and replace the ramp north of Buxton.  
26           ▪ The beach north of Ramp 43 should be re-opened for a full mile all year as it is not used by  
27 pedestrians and would reduce the concentration of visitors at Cape Point. Re-open the ramp at  
28 the lighthouse old site in the off-season.  
29           ▪ The interdunal road from Ramp 44 to east of Ramp 49 should be re-opened with several  
30 crossover access point roads to the beach. The ramp at the Frisco Pier should be re-opened in  
31 the off-season and the beach re-opened to Ramp 55 in the off-season. Pole Road must be two  
32 lanes wide again for safe passage and Spur road widened to two lanes.  
33           ▪ Open ORV routes behind duneline and close routes in front of dunes in more sensitive areas.  
34           ▪ Possibly rotating the access roads might reduce the effect on the environment. Presently not  
35 all access ramps are in use, parts of the National Seashore are not open.  
36           ▪ Should existing roads or corridors become impassable due to water or dry sand, poles  
37 (bamboo/fiberglass) with painted tops could be used to direct ORV use. Signs at ramps for  
38 color-coded designation. Ramp closures should be minimal.  
39           ▪ An interdunal road should be established from Ramp 2 to Ramp 4.  
40           ▪ An interdunal road should be established from Ramp 4 to Oregon Inlet.  
41           ▪ Adding access via interdunal road at Ramp 4 to reach bridge area should be put into play.  
42           ▪ The innerdunal road to Ramp 49 is a good idea.  
43           ▪ Such a two-lane road should be open year around and only crossovers to beach that is closed  
44 should be closed but not the road itself. [in reference to an interdunal road from Ramp 44 to  
45 Ramp 49]  
46           ▪ But should be 1 mile North of Ramp 23. [in reference to an ORV corridor from 1 mile north  
47 of Ramp 27 to Ramp 34]  
48

49           **7. Provide for expanded beach access.**

- 1       ▪ Allow vehicles direct access to the water in areas such as Buxton Point, Hatteras Inlet,
- 2       Oregon Inlet. These three areas are primary for ORV access. On north beaches such as
- 3       between Ramps 23–34 a corridor properly marked, with stake borders, allowing pedestrian
- 4       usage of the beach outside of the borders. All of these boundaries should have been adjusted
- 5       to meet the needs of wildlife protection, and have access around said wildlife.
- 6       ▪ Ramps 43 and 44 are sometimes flooded. By opening the lighthouse access ramp the point
- 7       area can be accesses safely.
- 8       ▪ Any such plan should also have as a stated requirement an objective to maintain ORV access
- 9       to those areas that contain physical features most desirable for fishing, swimming,
- 10      beachcombing, bird watching, etc.
- 11      ▪ With exception of areas closed near housing areas to provide safety, all Hatteras Island
- 12      beaches should be open for access.
- 13      ▪ ORV corridor 5 to go north or move the passive area .05 mile south of Tri-village area with
- 14      multiple access points.
- 15      ▪ The beach north of the campgrounds should be open from Ramp 68 up to Ramp 59.
- 16      ▪ More sound side access is needed for islanders and visitors. ORV driving at the north end is
- 17      less of a priority for me, so I prefer limits on ORV driving there rather than south.
- 18      ▪ If the several miles between the bathhouse and boardwalk west of Frisco Pier and the village
- 19      of Hatteras are deemed safe for ORV use there should be a good portion of this beach re-
- 20      opened. The first half-mile west of the parking area and bathhouse and the half mile area east
- 21      of house in Hatteras Village could be considered for passive use, but ramps and access
- 22      between these two area should be provided for ORV use. The beach within the village of
- 23      Hatteras should be only seasonally closed to prevent the privatization issue, as is the Frisco
- 24      Village permanent closure.

25  
26   **8. Close ORV routes if there is standing water on them.**

- 27      ▪ Any established interdunal roads should be closed to ORV use if standing water is in the road
- 28      for longer than 24 hours. Open road when it is dry. Fresh water should not be ditched or
- 29      curveted away from the natural physiographic conditions that dictate the area it is in.
- 30      ▪ Close ORV trails if they become impacted with standing water. All the soundside ORV trails
- 31      should be closed. Establish parking /staging areas for ORVs that allow people foot access to
- 32      the sound shore side (Cable Crossing, Coast Guard Station). Initiate a shuttle services; four-
- 33      wheel drive bus and boat service concessions can transport people to inlet spits.

34  
35   **9. Establishment of a vehicle-free area from Ramp 27 to Ramp 30 would be effective, but with**  
36   **modifications, including an ORV corridor.**

- 37      ▪ This should be Ramps 23–30 and 20 should open during the off-season.
- 38      ▪ When closures are in place there should be an ORV corridor that can be weaved around
- 39      closures. When closures are in place drivers of ORVs should be allowed to park vehicles and
- 40      access the beach outside the closure as a pedestrian.
- 41      ▪ Should be 23 to 34.
- 42      ▪ The area from Ramp 34 to Ramp 44 should be a passive year round recreational area.

43  
44   **10. Establishment of a vehicle-free area around Ramp 43 in front of the lifeguarded beach**  
45   **would be effective, but with modifications, including an ORV corridor.**

- 46      ▪ Establish a designated ORV access corridor near the back of the beach.
- 47      ▪ If you make this a passive beach keep 43 open to the south and create an access at the north
- 48      end of the present parking area so SUVs can by pass the swimming area and continue
- 49      towards the old lighthouse site.



- There is no lifeguard at Ramp 43. It would be fine to designate from the jetties south for 3/10 of a mile as a lifeguard beach and keep it closed to ORV access year around. From that point south, approx. one mile to Ramp 43 should be open to ORV use year around. This one mile of beach is just not used even in the summer and people who want to see no ORVs can walk north for at least a mile and not see ORVs. See note on “passive recreation” areas at end.

**11. Establishment of a vehicle-free area from Ramp 43 to Cape Point would be effective, but with modifications to both dates and area of closure.**

- The current split between passive use and ORV use areas provides adequate access for all types of users. The only possible change that can be justified would be to adjust the period for seasonal closures to May 1 through October 15.
- Do away with Ramp 43. Make the area from Ramp 44 north to Ramp 34 a year round passive recreation area.
- This should read from 1/3 of a mile south of the jetties to one mile west of Ramp 49 with the current by-pass near Ramp 44 and a lengthened interdunal road from Ramp 44 south to just short of the Frisco campground.

***Permits, License, or Pass***

**1. Include a test, either written or drivers test, as part of the permit requirements, as well as educational materials.**

- But could this be tied to an endorsement on their current driver’s license.
- Should be modeled after Cape Cod National Seashore – people must come in person to see the education/resource film.
- Require if able to download booklet or pick up at any NPS office. Tackle shops would support this if permit were like the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) permit that is free and down loaded from the internet.
- Improved signage is not a concern. ORV drivers should be tested on where the ramps are in their written test to get an ORV permit.
- There could be a program that a driver could take a test (in a NPS office) that would teach an in-depth knowledge of ORV issues, conservation beach rules, etc., that with a passing score the driver would get a special (color& style) of hang tag. This would set them apart, and garner respect. Some of us “do” try to set a good example

**2. Provide certain types of permits (sticker, hanger, etc.) with specific information on them, as well as issuing them to the driver or the vehicle.**

- Would like to see the sticker on the windshield, back glass, or both. Not everyone wants a bumper sticker.
- The permit should have an ID number associated to a particular driver.
- Definitely effective, but the permit should have the information of the permit holder in the event there is a violation.
- Permit would have to be displayed on the vehicle but all of your prior qualifications apply to a driver not a vehicle. A permitted driver would have to display permit on the vehicle he is driving.
- Certification as an ORV operator INSTEAD of Permit.
- A possible solution would be to give the driver a wallet card permit and return to the mirror hanger vehicle display which could be taken with the operator.
- Model after color-coding of Dare County Re-entry Permits. Give high-use areas a specific color. Multiple plastic color-coded self-cling permit stickers could be issued.

1       **3. Require permits to be applied for in person, at a NPS location or provide at an offsite**  
2       **location.**

- 3       ▪ Applicants should be required to make an in-person appearance at an NPS office.  
4       ▪ Might work if self administered over the web, with print out diplomas

5  
6       **4. Issue permits for various periods (week, month, and year) and provide for renewal of the**  
7       **permit.**

- 8       ▪ Two years would be better [in regards to how long a permit is good for].  
9       ▪ Be able to renew year to year without testing again. Make it an annual permit fee for 12  
10       months.  
11       ▪ Should follow the North Carolina (NC) saltwater license rules. NC resident and non-resident  
12       rates. Three day, two week, and annual rates.  
13       ▪ Permits should be based on duration of use. The more you use the beach as a highway, the  
14       more you should pay for the privilege.  
15       ▪ Should be patterned after NC hunting license options. Might not be able to charge more for  
16       out of state.  
17       ▪ There needs to be some type of a gate or queue to access the beach with an ORV.  
18       ▪ If there is a minimal charge then you have to make it available for both annual and a shorter  
19       duration the same as the NC Fishing License.  
20       ▪ If a permit system becomes necessary, users need the option for annual, two week and even  
21       lifetime.  
22       ▪ Annual, two week, one week, and even 1-3 days would be required.  
23       ▪ Why not issue multi-year permits or permits that do not expire?  
24       ▪ Permits should be based on duration of use.  
25       ▪ If a permit is issued it should be available to pedestrians on a two-week basis. The ORV user  
26       should be permitted only yearly so as not to add confusion to the process of ticketing by NPS  
27       officer

28  
29       **5. Include cost recovery in permit fees, adjust fees as needed, or base fees on similar programs.**

- 30       ▪ Included in cost should be resource management also. ORVs have a tremendous impact. The  
31       Executive Order issued by President Carter requires on-going monitoring to ensure the ORV  
32       plan is not impacting wildlife and natural resources. That must be part of the cost of doing  
33       business for the Seashore.  
34       ▪ Five years would be more effective. [in regards to adjusting fees]  
35       ▪ Adjustment for fee administration should provided for as long there are audits of the fund  
36       revenues and expenses.  
37       ▪ Use NC hunting license procedures as a guide.  
38       ▪ Have the fees same as NC license fee. (Meaning the same dollar fees charged based on time  
39       of permit.) Adjust as NC saltwater license fee is adjusted. Or, no adjustments allowed for 3  
40       years from date of change. Annual fee increases, are bi-annual would not be acceptable to  
41       me.  
42       ▪ I would recommend 1-year review after implementation, and then every 2-3 years afterwards.  
43       ▪ Issue a lifetime permit for one (1) nominal fee to seniors over 65. This offer could be similar  
44       to the NC saltwater fishing license. This permit should only be offered to NC residents and  
45       NC non-resident property owners. These people have monetary investments in the area.

46  
47       **6. Provide enforcement for violations by permit holders.**

- 48       ▪ A minimal response is necessary and expected along with fine or jail time appropriate to  
49       nature of violation.

- 1       ▪ Some violations deserve revocation of several years to permanent revocation of the privilege
- 2       to drive on the Seashore beaches. Drunk, a year to several years and/or included LOCAL
- 3       community service. Willful “resource closure entry” permanent revocation that can be
- 4       brought back with “local community service” for several years.
- 5       ▪ When a “permit” is “revoked” for drunk, unsafe driving, or “resource closure violation” local
- 6       community service can be used by the offender to “buy back” their privilege to have a permit
- 7       in the Seashore. Local community service has to benefit the Seashore and/or the local
- 8       community. Volunteering to work for/ with NPS staff distributing literature, repairing
- 9       resource closure fencing, beach cleanup, or goodwill ambassador can be used, the offender’s
- 10      awareness that breaking rules and laws, have serious consequences.
- 11      ▪ Consequences for violations should range from warnings and minor fines to lifetime loss of
- 12      driving privileges. Drivers should be responsible for finding out the most current regulations
- 13      and special conditions. The NPS should have a dedicated updated phone line with a recorded
- 14      message of any changes to ORV use and posted rules at consistent appropriate locations.

15  
16      **7. Require permit holders to carry certain equipment in their vehicle.**

- 17      ▪ Develop a list of “must carry” items for all ORVs; shovel, jack boards, tire gauge, tow
- 18      rope/chain, portable toilet first, aid kit, etc. If an ORV doesn’t have an attachment point on
- 19      both the front and back where a tow rope/chain can be attached, it should not be allowed on
- 20      the beach. That is a cost the driver has to bear so they can enjoy the Seashore.

21  
22      **8. Provide alternatives to a permit system, such as being a member of a local organization or a**

23      **license system.**

- 24      ▪ An alternative may be however to require each ORV operator to belong to an association like
- 25      NCBBA. This would allow education and peer pressure to be leveraged. If any type of permit
- 26      system is implemented it would need to be based on low admin costs, high on operator
- 27      education, and be easily obtained. There should not any type of limit on the number of
- 28      permits. No first-come first-serve and no lotteries, etc.
- 29      ▪ Perhaps, introducing a second license-to-fish within specific boundaries may work best. If the
- 30      mandatory purchasing of a second license were put into place then fishing would lessen and
- 31      discipline could more easily be enforced to those who purchased a second license. In other
- 32      words, investing in an additional license would also mean gaining some environmental
- 33      responsibilities and privileges. The NPS could easily withhold ones license if rules were
- 34      broken and responsibilities were not upheld.
- 35      ▪ I would like it that if I bought the NPS annual park entrance pass (that I have used in
- 36      Colorado to get into Rocky Mountain National Park and Mesa Verde National Park), I would
- 37      automatically be put into the ORV access permit database and my NPS park pass would be
- 38      my ORV permit. Do not know how this works with my view on issuing the ORV permit to a
- 39      vehicle rather than a user/driver, but I should not have to pay twice for access to the Seashore
- 40      beaches.

41  
42      **9. Provide permits at low or no cost to the user, which could apply to specific user groups only.**

- 43      ▪ I could only support a permit system if it was priced so a person only at Hatteras for a week
- 44      would still find it worthwhile. Also, all funds collected stayed in the Seashore and were
- 45      dedicated to be used only for ORV issues and management.
- 46      ▪ Should a permit be needed then notice should be put at each ramp and only a free permit
- 47      given out at NPS locations or downloaded similar to USFWS permit in Pea Island.
- 48      ▪ Senior citizens should have a life time permit with no annual fee
- 49      ▪ For current residents with 10 or more years as full time residents in both Hyde and Dare
- 50      counties, issue a free lifetime permit.

- 1       ▪ \$75 - \$125 for an annual daytime permit affixed to the rear drivers side bumper. \$35 for a  
2 two-week daytime ORV permit. \$200 - \$300 for a limited Overnight permit (i.e., ORVs can  
3 only drive a limited distance from the ramp to an overnight vehicle area and park on the back  
4 beach section: see Cape Cod National Seashore ORV permit system). Each year prior to  
5 paying for a permit all drivers must watch a rules and beach resources audiovisual (AV)  
6 program of approximately 10 minutes and sign their registration card verifying they watch  
7 and understood the AV program and know their permit will be revoked if rules are broken. I  
8 have a sample AV program used at Cape Cod for this purpose in the 1980s if anyone is  
9 interested in viewing.

10  
11 **10. Provide management by permit in specific areas of the park only.**

- 12       ▪ What would be more effective is managing the vehicles and fishermen that like to park and  
13 fish where the beach is narrow, such as just south of Ramp 4 and the narrow area where the  
14 turtle nest was at 44. There are several spots between 23-34 that are narrow and easily  
15 blocked.
- 16       ▪ Use time weighted averaging, on a 24-hour basis. [in regards to liming the number of vehicles  
17 on the beach in congested areas]
- 18       ▪ For temporary closure areas in front of towns only. General beach access should have no  
19 permit or inhibition other than driver's license.

20  
21 **11. Involve the community and stakeholders in the permitting process, possibly with an**  
22 **oversight committee.**

- 23       ▪ I do believe that there should be a local committee that oversees the NPS in dealing with  
24 permits. That is with all procedures, costs, limits, etc. dealing with permits.

25  
26 **12. Require all Seashore users, not just ORV users, to have a pass or permit.**

- 27       ▪ The pedestrian user should wear a sticker on his or her shirt with colors such as red for  
28 weekly and blue for yearly. The yearly permit holders should also have one duplicate copy of  
29 the sticker in his or her wallet as well.
- 30       ▪ If permit is necessary and mandated by NPS then the permit should be at the entrances of the  
31 seashore and be for all users of the Seashore (not just ORV users).
- 32       ▪ Charge everybody for Seashore use, not just ORV users. Have a gate at Whale Bone Junction  
33 and Ocracoke Ferry Dock. Charge a fee for every person who enters the Seashore. A  
34 tollbooth at each location should work.
- 35       ▪ Any of the permits should be applied to both user groups, both ORVs and pedestrians. If the  
36 ORV user is limited to marked corridors with pullout every 50 yards and two lanes, the user  
37 is limited to that space. The ORV user can only reach the water as a pedestrian user after his  
38 ORV is parked within a pullout. A pedestrian user can come into contact with closures, if  
39 closures are properly bypassed by corridors, the ORV users are pedestrian users. Both ORV  
40 and pedestrian permits should be required if a permit is to be issued.
- 41       ▪ To avoid discrimination, all users of the seashore would have to be permitted. Cottage  
42 owners, who seek privatization of their beaches, would have to ensure that renters, passive  
43 so-called recreation users had permits. Charge everyone who enters the seashore \$5.00  
44 permit.
- 45       ▪ I feel everyone should pay a fee upon entrance to the Seashore and those fees should be spent  
46 only on improvements to the Seashore. Most importantly, I feel that Congress had clear and  
47 special intentions when they named and created the Seashore. Cape Hatteras Nation  
48 Seashore Recreational Area was established for the benefit of the people.
- 49       ▪ Individual vehicles should be licensed. Unlicensed drivers may drive a licensed vehicle if a  
50 licensed operator is in the vehicle or licensed drivers can drive other properly licensed  
51 outfitted vehicles. Fees for license should be commensurate for all the cost associated with

1 ORV management (including but not limited to resource management directly related to  
2 ORV, use extra patrol vehicles and law enforcement rangers). There should be no charge for  
3 individual licenses. Only vehicles should be required to have a paid license. If permits fees  
4 are not commensurate to the cost of enforcing all the costs of ORV management then suitable  
5 funds have to be established before ORV use can proceed. If funds are insufficient then ORV  
6 accessed should be restricted until funds are obtained.  
7  
8

### 9 *Carrying Capacity*

#### 10 **1. Establish a carrying capacity based on geographical distinctions.**

- 11 ■ I favor a system where the Seashore is divided into six geographical ORV units: Bodie  
12 Island, North Hatteras Beach, Cape Point, Hatteras Inlet, North Ocracoke, South Ocracoke.  
13 There should be one driving permit that is good for driving anywhere it is allowed in the  
14 Seashore. Each of the individual ORVs units should have separate ORV carrying capacities.  
15 When one unit's carrying capacity is reached, a visitor would have the option to queue up  
16 until a space is made available or try another unit.  
17

#### 18 **2. Establish carrying capacity based on beach and vehicle characteristics.**

- 19 ■ The carrying capacity example number (21:1) is too high. The width of the beach is a factor  
20 in how many vehicles can be parked on a beach. The higher the square footage of beach the  
21 more vehicles the beach can accommodate. When deciding the carrying capacity of a beach  
22 the turning radius of vehicles should also be considered. Extended cab pick-up trucks with  
23 rod racks attached to the front and back and trucks with camper shells have a larger turning  
24 radius and need more square footage. ORVs make high use areas even more crowded. An  
25 ORV footprint is considerable larger than an individual. An averaged sized ORV takes up  
26 about of 100 sq feet of beach, often this is bigger with cooler and rod racks on many vehicles.  
27 The average person takes a few square feet. Fewer vehicles in an area increases the carrying  
28 capacity for all users. High use areas should have smaller ORV carrying capacities with  
29 alternative means (shuttles) to bring visitors to the area.  
30

#### 31 **3. Use education and outreach to help address carrying capacity.**

- 32 ■ If capacity limits are to be put in place, publish normal heavy-use times that this may affect  
33 visitors so that they can adjust their travel plans accordingly. This would help distribute the  
34 visitor load more evenly to reduce the possibility of a visitor being blocked from accessing  
35 favorite beaches.  
36

#### 37 **4. Establish a cap rather than a defined carrying capacity.**

- 38 ■ I sincerely do not believe it is possible to establish a “carrying capacity” as that term is  
39 generally understood. I do believe there is a number, perhaps the number there on the busiest  
40 day of (say) 2007 plus 10 percent, which should represent a “cap” on visitation. Cape  
41 Hatteras National Seashore cannot absorb more visitors forever and somewhere it has to end.  
42 Making that number public now can save a lot of grief in years to come.
- 43 ■ I also believe the new regulations should provide some sort of “cap” (not the same as a  
44 carrying capacity). One day there will simply be no more room for added ORVs and possibly  
45 other visitors, too.  
46

### 47 *Parking*

#### 48 **1. Provide additional parking and limit parking to developed areas.**

- 49 ■ The goal should be to decrease the random parking along side Highway 12 due to safety  
50 reasons. However, more large parking lots should be limited to the currently developed areas.

1 The overarching goal is the safety of the non-ORV visitors but not's let sacrifice the green  
2 spaces for visitor parking lots in undeveloped areas.

- 3 ■ Expanded in-village parking should be evaluated and should not be considered for the edges  
4 of the villages. In order to fully utilize the seasonal closures, additional in-village parking  
5 should be considered for those visitors that are renting soundside and do not have access via  
6 ORV or via oceanfront accommodations.

7  
8 **2. Provide additional parking areas.**

- 9 ■ As long as parking is expanded, possibly another parking lot just south of Canadian hole.
- 10 ■ Use the old ramp parking lots to expand Rout 12 passive access parking lots (Ramp 34 and  
11 Ramp 38 for an example).
- 12 ■ Ramp 43 is redundant and should be removed; expand the parking lot for passive users to  
13 access the beach north of there.
- 14 ■ Expand closer towards Ramp 49 with restroom facilities. [in reference to expanding the  
15 parking area on the access road to Frisco campground.]

16 **3. Design any new parking or interdunal roads in an environmentally sensitive manner.**

- 17 ■ Interdunal roads often go through seasonal wetlands – any new roads need to be designed so  
18 this does not happen. Existing roads should be closed when portions are wet to protect water  
19 quality and keep the drivers from making their own detours through wetlands.
- 20 ■ New parking areas on ocean or soundside should be made with an environmentally friendly  
21 surface (not asphalt). It is a given that these sites will end up eroding into the ocean – so lets  
22 not make another source of pollution.

23 **4. Restrict ORV parking in certain areas of the ramps and beach.**

- 24 ■ No parking within 200 yards of a ramp. No parking in ORV trails; park vehicles in a way  
25 that does not obstruct access for others. Give Law Enforcement Rangers the responsibility  
26 to direct parking in ORV areas that increase accessibility and create order.

27  
28  
29 *Alternative Transportation*

30 **1. Provide Alternative Transportation.**

- 31 ■ Consider benefits of an alternate ‘taxi’ service to be provided by NPS or NPS certified  
32 private contractors (shallow boat, ORV, etc.). This service would be designed to provide the  
33 best experience for the visitor (CUSTOMER) with the Best impact on our environment.
- 34 ■ This would be an area for an entrepreneur. The Seashore could sell a license to allow  
35 operation of such a business.
- 36 ■ High use areas, like Cape Point, should incorporate a shuttle system in place to afford those  
37 people that do not have an ORV, ORV permit, or do not want to wait in a queue an  
38 opportunity to recreate in that unit.

39  
40 *Accesses for the Disabled*

41 **1. Provide additional options for disabled visitor access to the beach.**

- 42 ■ On ORV beaches reserve areas close to the beach for disabled vehicles to park, similar to  
43 handicapped parking areas in parking lots.
- 44 ■ We need more handicap access. There is only one ramp for these people who live all year  
45 round, and ramps for the handicaps all year around from Salvo to Hatteras Village.

46 **2. Establish methods to ensure people are disabled.**

- 47 ■ NPS will need to implement some process to “certify” that a person is disabled. As we have  
48 all observed, many drivers of cars having disabled licensed plates are quite able to access the  
49 beach without any assistance.

- 1           ▪ Handicapped folks need to get out to the beach with their fishing gear; they should be
- 2           allowed a passenger.

### 4           *Additional Amenities*

#### 5           **1. Consider different alternatives for restroom facilities.**

- 6           ▪ I do not know if “sweet-smelling vault toilets” are the way to go. Cost? Maintenance?
- 7           What are the alternative means of providing toilets? What is done now? Have clevis
- 8           multrum systems been explored?

#### 9           **2. Provide fish cleaning stations at out of the way locations or at locations in the villages.**

- 10          ▪ Since the villages were allowed to remain within the Seashore boundary to provide visitor
- 11          services, why not have the tackle shops or other business provide fish cleaning stations to
- 12          visitors. After all, they sell them the bait and tackle to go fish, so they should help the
- 13          Seashore by being responsible for the results of the fishing.
- 14          ▪ Trash disposal and fish cleaning facilities should be out of sight and situated where they will
- 15          not affect native species or attract predators, not where they are most convenient for users.

#### 16          **3. Provide additional amenities such as restrooms and fish cleaning stations at specific use**

- 17          **areas.**
- 18          ▪ More fish cleaning tables and dumpsters are needed at the busy Ramps: 4, 23, 34, 38, 49, 55,
- 19          59, 70, or 72. Places to dump portable toilets will also have to be increased.

### 21          *Commercial Fishing*

#### 22          **1. Consider restricting commercial fishing operations in some areas of the Seashore.**

- 23          ▪ A few areas should be off limits. I would consider 200 yards from fishing piers and some
- 24          other selected areas but generally, commercial fishermen that are legal residents of the
- 25          villages should be allowed in passive recreational areas to commercial fish.
- 26          ▪ Really feel beach commercial fishing should be outlawed as in Florida. This type of
- 27          commercial fishing is not economical favorable nor helpful.
- 28          ▪ You should take a page from our regulations here in Maryland and keep the commercial guys
- 29          at least 3 miles off shore at all times

### 31          *Law Enforcement*

#### 32          **1. Ban or limit pets on the beach and fine off-leash violations.**

- 33          ▪ I would ban pets from being on the beach before I would enforce the dog off leash rules. In
- 34          Rocky Mountain National Park, pets are permitted in vehicles but not on park trails, etc.
- 35          ▪ Dogs off leash should be a ticket first time, every time. The same for anybody walking their
- 36          dog without a means to pick up the poop. A dog owner without a dog should get a ticket.
- 37          ▪ Better yet, prohibit all pets from all beaches.

#### 38          **2. Increase severity of fines/consequences for violations or use alternatives to fines.**

- 39          ▪ The NPS should send a message to all ORV operators on Seashore beaches that they will not
- 40          tolerate intentional driving in closure area, on sand dunes, or any other restricted areas. Their
- 41          policy should be that anyone caught driving in illegal area will have their vehicle seized on
- 42          the spot and not returned to them until their court date. This policy should also apply to
- 43          serious alcohol related driving infractions; this get tough policy should be advertised in
- 44          advance of its implementation, but when in effect strictly enforced violator.
- 45          ▪ Community service might be a better route.

#### 46          **3. Establish new restrictions related to trash disposal, camping, beach fires, parking, and**

- 47          **other activities on the ramps and beach.**
- 48          ▪ If an ORV does not have a trash bag/container readily available when asked that should be a
- 49          fine, there is no excuse.
- 50          ▪ No day or night camping on the beach.

- 1           ▪ Designated areas where cooking may be allowed.
- 2           ▪ Limit the length of time a vehicle may park on high use beaches (example, Cape Point).
- 3           ▪ Prohibit adjusting air pressure on ramps (no airing down at ramps).
- 4           ▪ These need to include preventing camping, and drinking of alcoholic beverages, of all kinds,
- 5           even of canned beer. Law enforcement has been lacking in the past with random nighttime
- 6           patrols. An enforcement officer has to be there to pick up a phone call for a reported violation
- 7           at all times.
- 8           ▪ Prohibit all recreational activities and access from 11 pm to 5 pm if there is not sufficient
- 9           Seashore staff to patrol the area.
- 10          ▪ Requiring a free permit, possibly available on the internet, to limit the location of the fire.
- 11          ▪ Banning alcohol from the Seashore will be impossible to enforce, and your rangers already
- 12          know this.

13       **4. Increase law enforcement personnel, post number of personal on duty, and include**  
 14       **unmarked rangers.**

- 15          ▪ Would be a great idea for the numbers of law enforcement officials to be posted. Most law-
- 16          abiding people take great pride in Cape Hatteras National Sea Shore and will welcome the
- 17          chance to help police themselves and others who do not respect our great treasure.
- 18          ▪ Additional rangers are needed to enforce the existing laws. There should be at least one (1)
- 19          ranger for each ramp or beach access. A ranger should not have to cover any more area than
- 20          between ramps. If they have to cover more area than this, their response time is to long.
- 21          ▪ Rangers should patrol in undercover vehicles and uniforms at random intervals and locations
- 22          at various times of the day. Passive areas should be patrolled on foot. Law enforcement
- 23          officers should perform dual roles and be able to conduct interpretive programs and resource
- 24          management, multi task by combing turtle patrol with normal patrol duties and informational
- 25          resource programs with patrol duties.
- 26          ▪ To not unduly burden the NPS with a high cost enforcement - on each ramp, place signage
- 27          with large bold lettering. Ranger on duty, cell phone # 1-252-, report any ORV violations,
- 28          right away, vehicle, make color, and license number very helpful. This way everyone can be
- 29          eyes for enforcement for the NPS and will likely cause people to think first.
- 30          ▪ Raise fines, especially related to dog off-leash and alcohol violations.
- 31          ▪ The nude sunbathing is against the law and should be discontinued in that area.

32       **5. Change the district boundaries for law enforcement.**

- 33          ▪ Change the boundary between the units. It is senseless to have 23 to 27 with the northern
- 34          group while the rest is with the south. 23-27 is very heavily used and by having the 23-34
- 35          split, it becomes a “step child.” In years past, I would see a Seashore ranger on most of my
- 36          beach runs. Now it’s the exception. Even when I see one they seldom stop, almost like they
- 37          are on the clock. Enforcement is the answer.

38  
 39       ***Outreach and Education***

40       **1. Provide a wide range of locations to distribute information, and distribute it in various**  
 41       **formats.**

- 42          ▪ Use modern electronic communication (email, text messages, local access cable).
- 43          ▪ Post the definitions on the ORV Access Website.
- 44          ▪ Having audio-visual components in every speaking event.
- 45          ▪ Expanding the species information to motels, bait shops, beach stores and other similar
- 46          facilities.



- 1       ▪ Educational outreach materials need to be included in the glass-enclosed signage at ramps.
- 2       Also, NPS should put together a brief cheat sheet and ask rentals to post the sheet. This is
- 3       where most people look.
- 4       ▪ Create a website with this information and publicize it so people can check before they leave
- 5       home.
- 6       ▪ Maybe an alert service could be created to notify interested parties via portable devices.
- 7       ▪ I would recommend circulation thru local real estate rental agencies and hotels/motels also.
- 8       ▪ As well as posting local TV channels that outline the usage of ORVs on the beach, such as
- 9       Outerbanks Angler.
- 10      ▪ Include also hotels, motels, beach outlets, restaurants, and the many real estate management
- 11      (house rental companies) in this program.
- 12      ▪ A Cape Hatteras National Seashore ORV Access Website, kept up to date in a positive and
- 13      informative manner might be an effective way to communicate status of wildlife activity at
- 14      each ramp. Or, better yet, a changeable sign at each ramp: The sign would show the location
- 15      and type of nearby wildlife activity and closures. For example “.5M N Turtle Nest Hatch By
- 16      Aug 15.”
- 17      ▪ With some sort of “Beach Friendly” window placard. [in reference to providing a workshop
- 18      for store owners on beach driving and resource stewardship]
- 19      ▪ Non-resident property owners and accommodation providers should be included. Realty
- 20      agencies have annual outings for owners where presentations could be made. [in reference to
- 21      providing a workshop for store owners on beach driving and resource stewardship]
- 22      ▪ The role of the rental agencies needs to be defined and they need to become more engaged in
- 23      disseminating NPS policies and rules. Every rental property should be required to have
- 24      posters with all policies and rules clearly presented with the NPS logo, so that renters know
- 25      these rules are serious and enforcement is anticipated. All retail stores should be required to
- 26      post NPS rules in a conspicuous place near entrances and exits.
- 27      **2. Use Seashore volunteers, including fishing and birding groups, to provide educational**
- 28      **information.**
- 29      ▪ Maybe not hiring Seashore rangers but enlisting the use Seashore volunteers.
- 30      ▪ This could be accomplished by developing programs with user group organizations at little
- 31      cost and or developing internship programs with local high school or college students.
- 32      Training programs for these interns could be conducted by both local user group
- 33      organizations and NPS staff in order to keep costs low and maximize user group “ownership”
- 34      or “stewardship” of the Seashore.
- 35      ▪ The Seashore should have both an ORV and a Natural Resource subcommittee reports to an
- 36      overall Cape Hatteras citizen advisory committee that in turn recommends actions to the
- 37      Seashore.
- 38      ▪ Don’t limit this to ORV groups; include fishing clubs and conservation groups such as the
- 39      Coastal Conservation Association (CCA).
- 40      ▪ Local tackle shops as well – many online fishing web sites would be more than happy to
- 41      promote these programs.
- 42      ▪ Solicit volunteers using avenues such as Surfrider, OBPA, NCBBA, and others.
- 43      ▪ How about using such groups to develop a database so we have actual numbers of various
- 44      species.
- 45      ▪ These environmental groups should also have maps to distribute with alternative routes
- 46      around closures, along with educating the public as to what birds are there and threatened by
- 47      pedestrian and ORV usage within the closure.
- 48      ▪ Any group that is willing to conduct programs such as this should be encouraged to do so if
- 49      the program is open to all visitors and does not require membership in said group. I also

1 suggest these groups be allowed to give out and sell group memberships during these events.  
2 If any money beyond memberships is charged, then the group should be considered a vendor  
3 and fall under another set of regulations, which includes paying a premium fee to do business  
4 in the Seashore.

- 5 ■ Locals, frequent visitors, clubs and associations should be solicited regularly for input, not as  
6 individuals producing singulars ideas but as a wealth of knowledge to be shared with  
7 Seashore management. Establish an advisory board/group to help with decision making on a  
8 regular basis (knowledge is being ignored and wasted by overly zealous managers protecting  
9 “their” territories).
- 10 ■ The NPS needs to go to a workshop provided by lifelong residents of the island to improve  
11 their knowledge of the history and importance of beach driving and species life history.
- 12 ■ I believe creating a well-trained auxiliary force for peak season is essential to the success of  
13 any plan. Many municipalities simply could not function if it were not for their highly  
14 trained volunteer auxiliaries. These supplemental forces could be used to monitor ORV  
15 ramps and passive use parking areas as well as the walk over ramps. They could also be used  
16 for beach patrol to assist in enforcing the rules. They can be recruited from many, many  
17 places and can be structured to be short duration engagements to attract as many candidates  
18 as possible.

19 **3. Incorporate a transition period to the new plan in education.**

- 20 ■ Should take into account time needed to transition to different ORV access system as well as  
21 need to educate users. 1.A.2. would not be effective as an alternative with an “overnight”  
22 implementation requirement. Reconfigured ORV access system should also consider  
23 grandfathering or exempting some existing uses or users.
- 24 ■ Whatever the plan looks like at the end of the process, there must be a transition period to  
25 adapt to changes.
- 26 ■ The plan should provide for a system in which major changes can be implemented over time.  
27 For example, if an additional parking lot is deemed necessary, or additional ramp is deemed  
28 necessary, the public or the Seashore should have a process by which this can be requested  
29 and in time granted or denied. In this way, all stakeholders will have some input in the ORV  
30 plan as uses for the Seashore grow and as needs change.
- 31 ■ **Create outreach programs that address species protection.**
- 32 ■ Programs should be available to adults also. Besides public school programs, it should be  
33 offered to community college and four-year college students.
- 34 ■ Check out Topsail beach programs. Topsail beach even has a turtle hospital.
- 35 ■ As long as the NPS also shows the “shortcomings” of natural hatching. Also, it should be  
36 explained to the public the “whys” on natural hatching vs. removal to a safer location due to  
37 the changing environment on Hatteras Island.
- 38 ■ Such information ought to be included at all public contact points on and off the Seashore,  
39 not just at ORV ramp contact points
- 40 ■ An actual picture of the plant [seabeach amaranth] needs to be displayed in the explanation,  
41 as well as do’s and don’ts when encountering this plant.

42 **4. Institute new educational programs or tours.**

- 43 ■ For birds or other wildlife animals. Kayak tours and other means of educational tours.
- 44 ■ The NPS should sponsor clean-ups throughout the year and encourage public participation.  
45 Many families would like to clean the beaches and the roadsides. The NPS could join the  
46 clean-ups and provide the participants with an educational program afterward that helps  
47 educate them about why cleaning the beaches is important and how their contributions made  
48 a difference.

49 **5. Create business opportunities related to environmental education.**

- 1           ▪ These “vendors” should be permitted and pay a premium to do business within the Seashore.  
2           Monies from these “special use” permits should go to the related budget that maintains the  
3           section of the Seashore being used by said vendor as well as to enforcement budgets. I  
4           suggest a 50/50 split of this revenue.  
5           ▪ In Ocracoke, a business provides tours of Portsmouth Island. Perhaps something similar  
6           would conduct the bird-watching or shell collection tour?  
7           ▪ A business involved in bird watching, shell collecting, as well as in tune to people that love  
8           nature and wildlife, would be an asset to this island.  
9       **6. Use a weekly letter/article from the Superintendent in the local newspaper.**  
10           ▪ Worth try, seasonally adjusted to topic.  
11           ▪ Information should be sent to local ORV/fishing groups for their newsletters.  
12           ▪ If they include a map of safe ORV and pedestrian access, to make the article unbiased, and  
13           demonstrate the Seashore’s efforts to balance recreation in the park with the wildlife.  
14           ▪ Why not use an RSS feed off the Cape Hatteras National Seashore website to provide this  
15           feed to all interested news orgs and third parties? This is a least cost solution that ensures all  
16           have timely relevant information  
17       **7. Provide better/additional signage with additional information for both safety and resource**  
18       **protection.**  
19           ▪ Add positive threatened and endangered species importance messages also.  
20           ▪ More creative signs are needed, e.g., possibly similar to fire hazard condition signs, eye  
21           catching colors, large easy to see charts, maybe even solar powered lighting etc  
22           ▪ Adding a pedestrian with a line to the ORV with the line would help.

### *Species Protection*

- 25       **1. Provide vehicle free areas during the breeding season**  
26           ▪ Areas must be Vehicle-Free during prebreeding and early breeding times or the Seashore will  
27           continue to neglect its responsibilities for protecting threatened and endangered species.  
28       **2. Restrict vehicles in areas with unfledged chicks.**  
29           ▪ Piping plover and oystercatcher breeding and nesting areas should be off-limits to non-  
30           official ORVs year-round.  
31           ▪ Recommend restricting vehicles in areas with unfledged chicks.  
32       **3. Provide pedestrian access around resource closures.**  
33           ▪ Pedestrians could have access path next to nesting areas if birds are not disturbed.  
34           ▪ Some areas should include pedestrian corridors as they may not impact resource protection  
35           and may be implemented to allow access to fishing, surfing, and kiting areas. Pedestrians  
36           should continue to have access to seasonal /safety closures.  
37       **4. Provide ORV corridors around resource closures.**  
38           ▪ Provide 100-foot corridor.  
39           ▪ The corridor could actually be smaller with pullouts to park vehicle and walk to the beach as  
40           a pedestrian.  
41           ▪ Add new interdunal access around resource and safety closures to give full access.  
42           ▪ Add additional interdunal roads to ensure Seashore access regardless of resource and  
43           storm/tide related closures.  
44       **5. Address other recreational activities, such as kite-boarding, in resource management**  
45       **through access limitations or increased education.**  
46           ▪ Would need to establish minimum distances that kite boards could be from nesting birds.  
47           Would also need to establish guidelines about retrieval of kites. For example, if a kite  
48           boarder falls offshore from resource closure, they shouldn’t be allowed to come to shore and

1 re-launch, but instead would need to walk their equipment down the beach to outside of the  
2 minimum set distance. There should also be guidelines about other extreme sports.

- 3 ■ Go to these groups (there may be 10 shops with in the Seashore) and educate them on  
4 violating these areas and they will self regulate their users and the problem will go away.  
5 Violators within the closures should be ticketed and if the problem causes a few of these the  
6 word will get out without further rules.

7 **6. Extend closure of points and spits, if implemented.**

- 8 ■ Recommend Aug. 31 as the end date or when the last bird fledges.

9 **7. Require Seashore staff entering resource closures to be easily identifiable.**

- 10 ■ The only change to the status quo that I would recommend is for NPS personnel to wear  
11 easily identifiable clothing such as bright orange vests so that visitors don't mistakenly enter  
12 one of these protected areas thinking that it is okay for folks to enter because they saw  
13 someone already in the area. Only to find out the hard way, that it is a NPS officer in the  
14 enclosed area and not a visitor or pedestrian. [this comment was made a few times]
- 15 ■ All persons going inside resource closures need to wear NPS or USFWS uniforms with  
16 reflective vests.

17 **8. Change the procedure of establishing American oystercatcher closures, including how they  
18 are established and when they are removed, as well as buffer distances.**

- 19 ■ Create habitat inside the plover closures beneficial for these birds. The abandon time could be  
20 shortened to 7 days.
- 21 ■ Recommend posting previously used sites and newly created sites prior to the start of the  
22 nesting season so that birds can establish territories without disturbance.
- 23 ■ Only when a nest is established. The last three years 50 oystercatcher chicks have fledged at  
24 Cape Hatteras National Seashore, which is more than in any previous three-year period.  
25 There have also been fewer nesting pairs so something must be happening at their wintering  
26 habitat that is reducing their numbers. Wherever they winter is where the added protection  
27 needs to be as we are doing a good job here.
- 28 ■ Biologists will not be able to monitor enough for this to be effective. American  
29 oystercatchers are extremely sensitive to human disturbance. We recommend a 150m buffer  
30 at this time. If future research at Cape Hatteras National Seashore demonstrates that smaller  
31 buffers are effective, than it may be possible to shrink buffers in the future.
- 32 ■ Walking toward a nest until signs of disturbing the nesting bird then using this distance plus  
33 15 feet should be sufficient. [in regards to needed buffer distance]

34 **9. Change the procedure of establishing piping plover closures, including how they are  
35 established and when they are removed, as well as recommended buffer distances.**

- 36 ■ Establish a smaller closure.
- 37 ■ Close the area(s) beginning April 1. If no activity seen by JUNE 15th or has been abandoned  
38 for two-week period, reopen. Most piping plover nesting occurs earlier in the spring, so this  
39 would not be a problem.
- 40 ■ Closures should be removed when the area has been abandoned for a 2-week period OR no  
41 later than July 15.
- 42 ■ Piping plover breeding areas should be off-limits to non-official ORVs year-round.
- 43 ■ If 150-foot buffer is inadequate to protect birds from disturbance, we recommend expanding  
44 buffer in fairly large increments to reduce the chance that fencing will have to be moved  
45 several times. This is necessary since the act of moving the symbolic fencing will likely  
46 disturb the birds.
- 47 ■ Require ¼ mile "use limitations" (definitely no ORVs) around any nest or active breeding  
48 behavior (i.e., territory establishment, courtship, etc.) for habitat preservation, until recovery  
49 plan numbers are reached and only then lessen limitations as long as monitoring shows no  
50 negative effects on wildlife or habitat.

1 **10. Change the procedure of establishing colonial waterbird closures, including how they are**  
2 **established and when they are removed, as well as recommended buffer distances.**

- 3     ▪ Same as above. Recommend a 100–200m buffer (depending on which species present) based  
4 on existing literature (Rogers and Smith 1995; Erwin 1989).  
5     ▪ Recommend establishing closures at suitable nesting habitat by April 1. Colonial waterbirds  
6 need undisturbed areas for courting and establishing territories. Furthermore, least terns  
7 often begin scraping and laying eggs in April.  
8     ▪ Until recovery plan numbers are reached, establish “vehicle-free beaches” starting March 1.  
9     ▪ Create suitable habitat around the pond at the Point, all the way to Ramp 45. Remove  
10 predator hiding areas, by cutting the grass and bushes. The pond is rich with the foods these  
11 birds thrive on, and fishermen will not be a problem at all. The open beach created would  
12 encourage birds to use this area. Discourage courting/nesting on the north beach (Ramps 23–  
13 34) That is valuable human space.  
14     ▪ Difficult to implement. Expand the 150-foot buffer around the nesting sites of American  
15 oystercatcher and waterbirds outside of existing closures.

16 **11. Restrict ORV use in areas where seabeach amaranth is found.**

- 17     ▪ Seabeach amaranth growing areas should be off-limits to non-official ORVs year-round.

18 **12. Reduce speed limit in areas of resource closures.**

- 19     ▪ Establish ORV passing roads lower speed limits 5 mph or less.

20 **13. Use volunteers for species management efforts and involve the public.**

- 21     ▪ That is, it is a known fact that past winter closures have with no ORV use have encouraged  
22 growth of vegetation that these birds dislike and caused them to migrate to areas closer to  
23 ORV use areas. Close half the section of present closed areas now used and with NPS and  
24 volunteering groups prepare the open half to better serve the birds in coming years. These  
25 preparations and allowing ORV use in the area would the habitat for closure of this half in  
26 the following year when the other half would be done likewise. Then summer closures would  
27 be smaller and winter closures would be patchwork opened to allow every (?) year these  
28 groups would further enhance the area for following years and all parties are happier.  
29     ▪ The Seashore should engage and seek environmental NGO’s and other groups (universities  
30 and individuals) that have professionals with expertise, data collecting abilities and resource  
31 recovery backgrounds that could assist the Seashore with resource management.  
32     ▪ The Seashore should set up long distance observation and education experiences for visitors  
33 often during active breeding periods with interpreters and several good spotting scopes.  
34 Terms should be defined, i.e., “sustainable habitat,” etc. Term “closure” should only be used  
35 if an area cannot even be observed from an area monitoring camera. All programs to be  
36 successful will require sustained funding at a needed level. Much vehicle-free habitat/beach  
37 will be needed until sustainable populations are reached (see Plover Recovery Plan) then  
38 increase pedestrian access and NPS controlled beach taxi type services.

39 **14. Provide alternate solutions to closures at the spits and points, such as providing additional**  
40 **access and rotating access.**

- 41     ▪ Definitely keep the east side open but allow the west side open also, to reduce traffic from  
42 only one direction. In recent years it has been a problem with the west side being closed,  
43 especially when the campground road is off limits  
44     ▪ I would suggest perhaps a checkerboard type of rotation instead of such a drastic rotation.  
45 The rotation on a large scale will change the vegetation growth would reduce the habitat of  
46 the birds

47 **15. Implement additional turtle management measures such as lighting, restricting night**  
48 **driving, and stopping the use of filter fences.**

- 49     ▪ Key areas like point and inlet should be lighted to prevent turtle nesting from blocking  
50 access.

- 1           ▪ With respect to turtle management, there were no suggestions regarding relocation of turtle  
2           nests. Such relocation could do more to increase the productivity of nesting turtles than all  
3           the lighting restrictions combined.
- 4           ▪ We recommend closing beaches to night driving or perhaps having a designated night fishing  
5           area if there is an appropriate site available.
- 6           ▪ No mention of vehicle lights and their potential impacts on nesting birds. Stop using filter  
7           (slit) fences around the turtle nests. Young hatchlings have been known to become entangled  
8           in fabric strands. Fencing confines hatchlings and may increase mortality due to ghost crab  
9           predation (i.e., ghost crabs have them penned in).
- 10          ▪ So-called “turtle-friendly” lighting works with loggerhead turtles only. As leatherback and  
11          green turtles also nest on the beaches of Cape Hatteras, no artificial lighting should illuminate  
12          the beach during nesting and hatching seasons (May through November).

13       **16. Provide additional protection from predators such as cages and nets.**

- 14          ▪ Historical data over a 10-year period will prove that current policies are a dismal failure. For  
15          the period 2000–2006, 46.1% of nests were lost which include those that hatched less than  
16          20% of the eggs. Predation is primarily from ghost crabs and only Back Bay National  
17          Wildlife Refuge has solved the problem by “caging” the nests. As mentioned earlier, there  
18          are many scientific studies, many of which were paid for by NPS that find that with proper  
19          management and enforcement ORV operation and shore birds are compatible. Are these NPS  
20          monies wasted if these studies are ignored?
- 21          ▪ Piping plover and other birds can be better protected for survival – by surround nets and  
22          overhead nets.

23       **17. Provide a more clear definition of “other protected species.”**

- 24          ▪ Regarding Part II Regulatory Framework under Threatened, Endangered, and Other Protected  
25          Species, the e.g., needs to be an i.e., and everything definitively listed that defines these  
26          “other protected species.” An e.g., is too open-ended. In III Glossary under U.S. Geological  
27          Survey Protocols, I have similar concern with “protected species” and “species of concern.”  
28          All these generic, general, open-ended terms need absolute “nuclear safe” definition put to  
29          them.

30       **18. Create a separate species management plan.**

- 31          ▪ Create a new Interim Protected Species Management Plan.

32  
33       *Other*

34       **1. Provide a sunset date for the regulation.**

- 35          ▪ I believe serious consideration should be given for the new regulations to have a sunset date  
36          when they will expire unless renewed in the wake of experience and evaluation. The  
37          evaluation is fully as important as the revision. I specifically do not support the idea of so-  
38          called “adaptive management.” In “informally” changing the substance of regulations, it  
39          may even be illegal.

40       **2. Consider the Seashore as a primitive recreational area.**

- 41          ▪ The entire seashore should remain a primitive recreational area. The addition of handicap  
42          access ramps, toilet facilities, shuttle service, escorted or guided tours and the like should not  
43          be allowed beyond those that currently exist.

44  
45       *Comments on Topics Outside the Scope of the Plan, With Legal/ Policy Constraint Issues,*  
46       *etc.*

47       **1. Open Pea Island to ORV Use and/or Considering Pea Island in the Cape Hatteras National**  
48       **Seashore Off-road Vehicle Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (plan/EIS)**  
49       **as a Pedestrian Only area.**

- 1           ▪ By not including ORV usage on the ocean side of the “Pea Island” portion of Hatteras Island,  
2 plan is not meeting its purpose of “providing a variety of appropriate visitor use...”
- 3           ▪ This may be effective if the entire beach including but not limited to Pea Island are in  
4 consideration. If this is considered, I recommend that the negotiating body start with the  
5 boundaries set when the seashore was established. The entire beach was open then as  
6 opposed to part of it as it is now.
- 7           ▪ From a safety standpoint, this is effective. However, impacts to access areas should be  
8 mitigated by opening areas on Pea Island that would not impact wildlife.
- 9           ▪ Ramp 23 gets users from the 3 villages, as it is the most convenient beach access for them.  
10 Why not put effort and education into directing the passive beach goers to Pea Island. Why  
11 not try to work out some cooperation with Pea Island whereby NPS would put in parking  
12 spaces just north of the S curves and also perhaps half way to Pea Island Headquarters. Both  
13 are units of Interior Department lets get some cooperation and negotiation there.

14  
15 **2. Allow dogs off-leash or create an off-leash area.**

- 16           ▪ Dog off leash should be seasonal. There’s something un-American about not being able to  
17 take your Labrador to chase a tennis ball on the beach... there is such a thing as TOO much  
18 legislation.
- 19           ▪ Away from closure areas and high passive use areas dogs could be under the voice command  
20 of the owner.
- 21           ▪ A low impact area for dog training should exist.
- 22           ▪ There should be areas where pets can be allowed to roam freely.

23  
24 **3. Limit management of some protected or species of concern.**

- 25           ▪ Seabeach amaranth should not be protected, as it is a farmed plant in America.
- 26           ▪ In the case of beach closures for turtle and bird resource protection, the closures should  
27 flexible in scope and approached with common sense. Closures should only be set up when  
28 the birds or turtles are present. None of us has a crystal ball and should not pretend we can  
29 know exactly where this wildlife may come and nest. When these animals choose to nest  
30 very close to the tidal zone, relocation of the eggs and in some cases animal should be  
31 relocated to a safer environment where they are not in danger damaged by high water/waves  
32 due to storms/wind, which is frequent. Closures should also be flexible to allow through  
33 access for ORVs and should not extend into the tidal zone. If the closure boundary needs to  
34 be extended in a particular direction, the boundary should be decreased in the opposite  
35 direction (consistent maximum closure size with some exceptions).

36  
37 **4. Create bird habitat at the Seashore in nearby areas, including allowing vehicles to drive  
38 over areas to create habitat.**

- 39           ▪ Plus remove the bird enclosure in late fall winter so ORVs can drive on the vegetation.
- 40           ▪ Restricting access is not the answer. The NPS needs to consider alternatives such as creating  
41 new areas with dredge material in the sound, along Pea Island, and on the south side of  
42 Oregon inlet, which would be conducive to the plover habitat.
- 43           ▪ Suitable habitat can be created by clearing the areas on the interior of the Point down to  
44 Ramp 45. Discouraging prenesting behavior on the north beach (Ramps 23–34) would allow  
45 this beach to be used by humans.
- 46           ▪ Clear the brush between the pond and Ramp 45. There is a huge amount of valuable feeding  
47 resources in that area. At Hatteras spit the inside area should also be cleared; this will allow

1 the birds to nest/rest farther from the shoreline. The same thing can be done at Oregon Inlet,  
2 clear the interior of brush and grasses. This will allow birds to feed at the small creeks and  
3 puddles that would form.

- 4 ■ If one or two feet of sand could be added to the western edge of the vegetated flats area of  
5 Ocracoke Spit, an ideal area for nesting could be created and this would be a win-win  
6 situation.
- 7 ■ How about plowing down some of the dunes that have formed on brush & storm trash so  
8 there would be larger sand flats for the birds to use.
- 9 ■ Why not expand use of Cape Lookout National Seashore for wildlife closures where  
10 recreation/economic impact is minimal.
- 11 ■ Instead why don't you partner with the Corps of Engineers and other entities to provide more  
12 and larger dredge spoil islands in the sound that can be created, maintained and closed to  
13 public as resting and breeding areas for this wild life. The area of Cape Hatteras Seashore is a  
14 shoulder area for both nesting and wintering plovers and be at the edge of their habitat makes  
15 it a poor choice for the high cost of trying to increase their populous here. Instead you can  
16 take Portsmouth Island who only sees a small percentage of visitors compared to this  
17 recreational seashore to do these closures. Portsmouth has little dune structure and many  
18 better areas to promote nest and wintering habitats. Also in the vegetated portion of this area  
19 that have become unfit for breeding habitat open portions of them each winter to ORV and  
20 encourage use of the vegetated area opened to expand the habitat needed for breeding the  
21 next season.
- 22 ■ Keeping the Ocracoke Island spit closed this long has dramatically changed the vegetation  
23 and habit for the very birds we are trying to attract. Due to mismanagement (wide-scale  
24 closure at Ocracoke Island spit) the birds are now forced (attracted due to habitat) to encroach  
25 on the habitat where the most visitor use is reserved. Restoration of this sand spit to the life  
26 long practice will be a good first step to improve this situation. Keeping the spit closed has  
27 allowed brush and vegetation to grow, which is actually shrinking the bird habitat.  
28 Alternatives need to be explored where by checkerboard rotations will help improve this. The  
29 checkerboard rotations are only for active nestings.
- 30 ■ We have to become proactive to get the best uses out of this Seashore. Clearing the interior of  
31 this spit will provide additional feeding, nesting, resting areas for all the shoreline birds. By  
32 creating small interior puddles, even a tire track that fills with stagnant water, life will  
33 develop. Taking down the fences in the fall and winter will allow ORVs to help keep this  
34 area free of most regrowth. It will also cause additional tracks that will form pools of life for  
35 the non-fledged chicks to feed.

36  
37 **5. Relocate bird species to different areas or use a hatchery.**

- 38 ■ With the amount of predatory animals in the Seashore, I don't think man and ORV are the  
39 main concern. The eggs of the plover and other endangered species should be collected and  
40 hatched in captivity. This has worked in other areas and I can't see why it wouldn't work  
41 here.
- 42 ■ Create an ornithology lab on the core islands. Increase bird habitat there. Study the birds  
43 more closely in this lab. Collect eggs and incubate chicks to keep them going. Instead of  
44 certain groups using their money to get people off the beach. Use the money to create habitat  
45 and study birds in those areas already set aside. Build a wildlife refuge on the core islands  
46 and create a more perfect environment. Could become a self-supporting tourist attraction.

47  
48 **6. Encourage nesting in other areas.**

- 49 ■ Encourage birds to nest along Pea Island and other low impact beaches. Limit development.  
50 Encourage birds to nest in a less conflicting area with humans.



1  
2 **7. Relocate and/or incubate turtle eggs.**

- 3     ▪ I believe that turtle nesting areas should and must be better managed. Eggs should be moved  
4 to better areas so they have a chance to survive. Many turtle lay eggs in areas that have no  
5 chance of survival, but we just put flags around the eggs. There are other beach areas that do  
6 better jobs and even have turtle hospitals.  
7     ▪ Move all the nests and eggs either to an incubator or to Pea Island that is already a wildlife  
8 refuge and does not allow ORV access.  
9     ▪ If propagation of endangered species is a real goal, then it can be far more effectively  
10 achieved by incubating the eggs and nurturing the hatchlings and releasing them into the wild  
11 under more favorable conditions.  
12     ▪ Incubation should be looked into as an alternative to natural hatching in areas of nesting.  
13 Meaning, relocated the nest where necessary, to allow a hatch. Many areas, such as Cape  
14 Point as well as near Ramp 34 in Avon, and Frisco beaches are subject to change with winds.  
15 Many times turtle eggs are turned up by this erosion and lay there never hatching.  
16     ▪ Having volunteers to site nesting in a specific spot during nesting periods to late nests to be  
17 located and removed would be an asset. Not only would it allow more turtles to hatch, but it  
18 would also allow the monitoring of those other younger hatchlings and allow them to go  
19 seaward without predators, such as gulls destroying them.

20  
21 ***Law Enforcement***

22 **1. Change the terminology used for law enforcement to talk about guidelines or rules instead**  
23 **of requirements.**

- 24     ▪ Strike the work “requirements” and use the word “courtesy,” or “guidelines,” or “rules.”

25  
26 ***Other***

27 **1. Require changes to the local road network including speed limits, parking, and access**  
28 **points, in areas outside the jurisdiction of the NPS.**

- 29     ▪ Villages should be closed year round to ORV use, Dare County should provide access points  
30 and parking to NPS beach through village areas.  
31     ▪ The primary problem with aired down vehicles is that they travel at 45–50 mph while the  
32 speed limit between villages is 55 mph. This being the case, lowering the speed limit  
33 between villages to 45 during peak usage would minimize the possibility of accidents  
34 resulting from faster moving traffic trying to pass ORVs  
35     ▪ Provide ATV access along with the ORV plan; remove the helmet requirement on beach  
36 same as farming operation or engaged in the act of hunting. 25 mph speed limit on beach  
37 combined with the act of fishing usually during the summer heat along with the salt spray  
38 from the ocean is not a safety issue. The helmet requirement should be removed.  
39     ▪ Possibly different but a NO to fewer ramps. Hatteras Inlet road to the point should be  
40 redeveloped along with the dunes that were destroyed /overrun by previous hurricanes. NPS  
41 has been lax in rebuilding dunes only state road crews have been effective.

42  
43 **2. Address other projects or issues in the Seashore that are not related to the ORV Plan/EIS.**

- 44     ▪ I am disappointed in the revegetation and fixing up of the area at the old Lighthouse site since  
45 the big move. How can a person in a wheelchair view the beach or the historical “Old  
46 Lighthouse Site.”

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- Fish resources of all kinds should be protected. Recent viewing of gill netting was very destructive to fish stock. At a minimum, there should be a requirement to return all unwanted fish to the water as they are pulled out.
  - No horses on beach, no one picks up horse poop.
  - Cape Point campground should be a designated Army Corps of Engineers project/training exercise with the goal of re-establishing it as THE Beach Camping Gem in the National Park system. With permanent improvements to grading and drainage, the site could be restored to past levels of appearance and “quality of experience” - second to none in the country.
  - At some point in time, there will be damage to existing ocean front structures. There needs to be an established policy(s) regarding what may be erected, set backs from the high tide mark, re-building, federal flood policy
  - We need a sound ordinance; too many times I could not hear the waves over the music blaring. We do not go to the beach to hear a rock concert every day.
  - Only if you limit occupancy of oceanfront houses with bright lights shining on the beach as well.[in reference to closing Cape Point during breeding season]